

## Assembly Bill No. 2626

### CHAPTER 452

An act to amend Section 3502.1 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to healing arts.

[Approved by Governor September 10, 2004. Filed  
with Secretary of State September 10, 2004.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2626, Plescia. Physician assistants.

Existing law provides for regulation of physician assistants by the Medical Board of California, and establishes the Physician Assistant Committee within the board with certain powers and duties. Existing law authorizes a physician assistant to issue a drug order, subject to specified requirements. Existing law requires a supervising physician and surgeon to review, countersign, and date the medical record of a patient cared for by a physician assistant for whom the supervising physician and surgeon's drug order has been issued.

This bill would limit this requirement to Schedule II drug orders. The bill would require the committee to consult with the board and report during its next sunset review on the impact of exempting Schedule III and Schedule IV drug orders.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 3502.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

3502.1. (a) In addition to the services authorized in the regulations adopted by the board, and except as prohibited by Section 3502, while under the supervision of a licensed physician and surgeon or physicians and surgeons authorized by law to supervise a physician assistant, a physician assistant may administer or provide medication to a patient, or transmit orally, or in writing on a patient's record or in a drug order, an order to a person who may lawfully furnish the medication or medical device pursuant to subdivisions (c) and (d).

(1) A supervising physician and surgeon who delegates authority to issue a drug order to a physician assistant may limit this authority by specifying the manner in which the physician assistant may issue delegated prescriptions.

(2) Each supervising physician and surgeon who delegates the authority to issue a drug order to a physician assistant shall first prepare

and adopt, or adopt, a written, practice specific, formulary and protocols that specify all criteria for the use of a particular drug or device, and any contraindications for the selection. The drugs listed shall constitute the formulary and shall include only drugs that are appropriate for use in the type of practice engaged in by the supervising physician and surgeon. When issuing a drug order, the physician assistant is acting on behalf of and as an agent for a supervising physician and surgeon.

(b) “Drug order” for purposes of this section means an order for medication which is dispensed to or for a patient, issued and signed by a physician assistant acting as an individual practitioner within the meaning of Section 1306.02 of Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, (1) a drug order issued pursuant to this section shall be treated in the same manner as a prescription or order of the supervising physician, (2) all references to “prescription” in this code and the Health and Safety Code shall include drug orders issued by physician assistants pursuant to authority granted by their supervising physicians, and (3) the signature of a physician assistant on a drug order shall be deemed to be the signature of a prescriber for purposes of this code and the Health and Safety Code.

(c) A drug order for any patient cared for by the physician assistant that is issued by the physician assistant shall either be based on the protocols described in subdivision (a) or shall be approved by the supervising physician before it is filled or carried out.

(1) A physician assistant shall not administer or provide a drug or issue a drug order for a drug other than for a drug listed in the formulary without advance approval from a supervising physician and surgeon for the particular patient. At the direction and under the supervision of a physician and surgeon, a physician assistant may hand to a patient of the supervising physician and surgeon a properly labeled prescription drug prepackaged by a physician and surgeon, manufacturer as defined in the Pharmacy Law, or a pharmacist.

(2) A physician assistant may not administer, provide or issue a drug order for Schedule II through Schedule V controlled substances without advance approval by a supervising physician and surgeon for the particular patient.

(3) Any drug order issued by a physician assistant shall be subject to a reasonable quantitative limitation consistent with customary medical practice in the supervising physician and surgeon’s practice.

(d) A written drug order issued pursuant to subdivision (a), except a written drug order in a patient’s medical record in a health facility or medical practice, shall contain the printed name, address, and phone number of the supervising physician and surgeon, the printed or stamped name and license number of the physician assistant, and the signature of



the physician assistant. Further, a written drug order for a controlled substance, except a written drug order in a patient's medical record in a health facility or a medical practice, shall include the federal controlled substances registration number of the physician assistant. The requirements of this subdivision may be met through stamping or otherwise imprinting on the supervising physician and surgeon's prescription blank to show the name, license number, and if applicable, the federal controlled substances number of the physician assistant, and shall be signed by the physician assistant. When using a drug order, the physician assistant is acting on behalf of and as the agent of a supervising physician and surgeon.

(e) The medical record of any patient cared for by a physician assistant for whom the supervising physician and surgeon's Schedule II drug order has been issued or carried out shall be reviewed and countersigned and dated by a supervising physician and surgeon within seven days.

(f) All physician assistants who are authorized by their supervising physicians to issue drug orders for controlled substances shall register with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

(g) The committee shall consult with the Medical Board of California and report during its sunset review required by Division 1.2 (commencing with Section 473) the impacts of exempting Schedule III and Schedule IV drug orders from the requirement for a physician and surgeon to review and countersign the affected medical record of a patient.

